

Towards a Reassessment of Indrabhūti's *Jñānasiddhi*

TORSTEN GERLOFF AND JULIAN SCHOTT

University of Hamburg

torsten.gerloff@uni-hamburg.de, julian.schott@uni-hamburg.de

This article argues for the reassessment of Indrabhūti's *Jñānasiddhi* in the light of newly discovered primary witnesses and previously unnoticed relations to other works. Presumably composed in the late eighth to early ninth century CE, it belongs to the earlier phase of Tantric Buddhism, a transitional period between the predominance of the *Yoga-* and *Mahāyogatantras* to the later *Yoginītantras*, and relates to a variety of important scriptures of this formation. While this article briefly discusses the origins, authorship, contents and context of the *Jñānasiddhi*, including a brief overview of its modern scholarship, it also highlights its intertextual relations with and notable influences upon other tantric works of major importance. The *Jñānasiddhi* stands out as a tantric scripture of paramount importance, and we attempt to demonstrate the necessity of its reassessment with recourse to hitherto neglected but nonetheless vital sources that have only recently come to light.

Introduction

Besides the Buddhist *tantras* themselves, Indrabhūti's *Jñānasiddhi* (JS), in English 'The Accomplishment of/through Gnosis', is, without any doubt, to be counted among the most important and influential early Indian texts of Tantric Buddhism. It touches in brief upon a variety of topics and, in the course of time, had a significant influence on a large number of important works. The JS was composed in (Buddhist) Sanskrit by a certain Indrabhūti, local ruler of the legendary kingdom of Oḍḍiyāna (also: Uḍḍiyāna) in the area of the Swat valley of present-day northwest Pakistan. Estimated on the basis of the surviving internal and external evidence, the work is to be dated to the second half of the eighth and the beginning of the ninth century of the Common Era. In the course of time, the JS had a major impact on the development of the concept of *mahāmudrā* (Tib. *phyag chen*; 'Great Seal'), based on which a complex system of soteriological teachings and practices evolved. Therefore, the JS is to be seen as a cornerstone in the development of the Buddhist tantric traditions, citing, and in parts extensively commenting upon, passages of

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other key tantric works such as the *Sarvatathāgatatattvasaṃgraha* (STTS; late seventh to early eighth century CE), the *Guhyasamājatantra* (GST; eighth century CE) and the *Sarvabuddhasamāyoga* (SBS; first half of the eighth century CE).¹ Thus, the JS bears witness to the transition of the *Yoga-* and *Mahāyogatantras*' predominance to that of the later *Yoginītantras*. Until today, the work remains of paramount importance to the schools of Tibetan Buddhism, for example those of the bKa 'brgyud tradition.

The author of the *Jñānasiddhi*

Despite the undeniable progress that has been made in the past decades in the various areas of the study of Buddhist and non-Buddhist tantric traditions, the precise dating of the JS and clarification about its authorship remain uncertain. This is owed to the fact that there were at least three important rulers of the same name in that area, all of whom played a significant role in the development and spread of Tantric Buddhism. Dowman states that 'the identification of the various King Indrabhūtis presents the most intractable problem in the history of the siddhas' (1985, 232), adding further that 'the resolution of this conundrum requires further research' (1985, 234). It is exactly this further research, namely the close and careful study of the textual contents of the JS and its related texts, that offers the key to solving this conundrum. With respect to this problem, the investigation of the author's philosophical positions and his exposition of the *mahāmudrā* doctrine, the works that he cites and comments on, are of utmost importance. Another important issue is the study of traditional accounts regarding the text and its authorship, such as those found in the writings of Bu ston (1290–1364 CE) and Tāranātha (1575–1634 CE), and within extra-canonical collections such as, for instance, in the *Lo rgyud*, a hagiographic account contained in the '*Bri gung bka*' *brgyud chos mdzod chen mo* (hereafter '*Bri gung chos mdzod*; siglum B).

Despite the fact that there is disagreement about the question of whether there were two or three Indrabhūtis,² the traditional accounts, as well as the limited historical data available, also disagree about whether the JS was composed by Indrabhūti the First or the Second. The former, also called Indrabhūti the Great, considered to be the very Indrabhūti who is said to have requested the GST from the Buddha himself and who is sometimes counted as the first of the *Mahāsiddhas* (Tib. *grub thob chen po*),³ can tentatively, and in relation to the assumed dates of

1. As regards the dating of these texts, see Sanderson 2009, 125, 141, 145. Another text that seems to have influenced the author of the JS is preserved in Tibetan translation under the title *rDo rje dpal mchog chen po dang po* (D 453; cp. JS 1.58–62). Further, it may be noted that there survives a Tibetan translation of the **Sarvabuddhasamāyogaganavidhi* of [an] Indrabhūti (D 1672). It is possible that the author of this work is the same as the author of the *Jñānasiddhi*. Regarding the *Sarvabuddhasamāyoga*, see Szántó & Griffiths 2015.

2. For notes on the various Indrabhūtis and their dating, see Tucci 1949, 232; Jamgön Kongtrül Lodrö Tayé 2007, 382 n.34; Chattopadhyaya and Alaka 1990, 241 n.68; and Dowman 1985. As already pointed out by Ulrich Timme Kragh (2010), the study of Lakṣmīṅkarā's **Sahajasiddhipaddhati*, which survives in a relatively early Tibetan translation, may shed further light on the lives of the *Mahāsiddhas*. Regarding the relationship of the *yoginī* Lakṣmīṅkarā and the different Indrabhūtis, see Gerloff and Schott 2021, 6 n.12.

3. The life story (hagiography) of Indrabhūti according to Abhayadatta's account of the eighty-four

the GST and SBS, be dated as early as the second half of the eighth century.⁴ This roughly corresponds to what could be a plausible date for the JS, supported by the claim in the *'Bri gung chos mdzod* that 'the JS [itself] had been composed relying on the *Guhyasamāja* and the *Sarvabuddhasamāyoga*'.⁵ Irrespective of the fact that traditional claims are at times contradictory, and that our historic data are incomplete, the available information shows that the JS had a strong impact on other tantric works that later on became part of the so-called "Seven Siddhi Texts" (*Grub pa sde bdun*), a Tibetan collection of Indian *mahāmudrā* works (see below). Indrabhūti the First, moreover, is intimately associated with the *yoginī* Lakṣmīṅkarā,⁶ who supposedly composed the *Advayasiddhi*, while the *'Bri gung chos mdzod* in the *Lo rgyud* confirms this association by stating that 'the *Advayasiddhi* had been composed relying on the JS'.⁷ In Tāranātha's 'The Seven Instruction Lineages' (*bKa' babs bdun ldan*), Indrabhūti the First is further regarded as having instructed the *siddha* Padmavajra (the First), author of the *Guhyasiddhi* (GS), and he in turn Anaṅgavajra (the Older)⁸, author of the *Prajñopāyavinīśayasiddhi*. This underlines a substantive relationship between the authors and contents of these works, all of which are contained in the *Grub pa sde bdun*.

About the *Jñānasiddhi*

Contents

Indrabhūti's JS, labelled *sādhanaopāyikā*, is significant not only for the understanding of the Buddhist tantric traditions in general, but also for the thorough study of the *mahāmudrā* instructions in particular. The JS can be classified within the genre of Tantric *Prakaraṇas* (see Szántó 2015). It is organized into a total of twenty chapters, comprising no fewer than five hundred verses composed in *anuṣṭubh* meter with additional sections in prose form. Further, the work contains several quotations of and commentarial sections to the *Guhyasamājatantra*, the *Sarvatathāgatattvaśaṃgraha* and other important works such as the *Sarvabuddhasamāyoga* (mainly in chapters

Mahāsiddhas is given in Dowman (1985, 229–234) and Robinson (1979, 150–152). The reassessment of these sources together with the careful study of the JS promises important indications for the delimitation of the Indrabhūti of the 'Jñānapāda School' of the GST, the presumed author of the JS, in relation to the Indrabhūti that is attributed to Saroruhavajra's transmission lineage of the Hevajra teachings. Regarding the latter, cf. Gerloff 2020.

4. Cf. Dowman 1985, 390 and Templeman 1989, 110 n.97. A further key to the more precise dating of the JS might be the explicit reference to the *Śrisamājottara* (i.e. GST ch.18) in its fifteenth chapter. The *Samājottara*, so it seems, was originally a separate text that was considered a 'supplementary scripture' of the GST, into which it was incorporated later on. On this and the dating of the *Samājottara*, see Tanemura 2015.
5. B (125–126): *gSang ba 'dus pa dang | Sangs rgyas mnyam sbyor la brten nas Ye shes grub pa mdzad do ||*.
6. B (122): *Indrabhūti che 'bring chung gsum du grags pa las | che ba lcam Lakṣmīṅkarā'i yab |*.
7. B (186): *de Ye shes grub pa la brten nas gnyis med grub pa mdzad pa ni 'di ltar ||*.
8. See Templeman 1989, 24–26. It may be noted, however, that there are also debates regarding the identification of various persons by the name Padmavajra; there were at least three, and there also seem to have existed two tantric authors by the name Anaṅgavajra. Regarding this, see Gerloff 2020, Part 1, 9–18.

Table 1 Chapters of the *Jñānasiddhi*.

Chapter	Title (Sanskrit, Tibetan)
1	<i>tattvanirdeśa</i> , <i>phyag rgya chen po bstan pa</i>
2	<i>rūpabhāvanāniṣedha</i> , <i>gzugs su bsgom pa dgag pa</i>
3	<i>sākāranirākaraṇa</i> , <i>rnam pa dang bcas pa('i ye shes) dgag pa</i>
4	<i>nirākāranirākaraṇa</i> , <i>rnam pa med par dgag pa</i>
5	<i>mūḍhabhāvanāniṣedha</i> , <i>rmongs pa bsgom pa dgag pa</i>
6	<i>āśvāsaprasāsatattvapratīṣedha</i> , <i>dbugs 'byung ba dang rngub pa'i de kho na nyid dgag pa</i>
7	<i>mahāsukhaprativarnīkāpratīṣedha</i> , <i>bde ba chen po smra ba dgag pa</i>
8	<i>pūnyajñānasamḥārāprāptiyupāya</i> , <i>bsod nams dang ye shes kyi tshogs rab tu 'phel ba</i>
9	<i>pāpapunyotpādavināśaparijñāna(nirdeśa)</i> , <i>bsod nams dang sdig pa skye ba dang 'jig pa yongs su shes pa</i>
10	<i>śūcyaśūcivikalpanāvivikta</i> , <i>gtsang ba dang mi gtsang ba'i rtog pa las grol ba</i>
11	<i>gamyāgamyarahita</i> , <i>bgrod pa dang bgrod pa ma yin pa dang bral ba</i>
12	<i>tattvasthāpana</i> , <i>de nyid gnas pa gzhas pa</i>
13	<i>gurulakṣaṇa(nirdeśa)</i> , <i>slob dpon gyi mtshan nyid</i>
14	<i>śiṣyalakṣaṇapariccheda</i> , <i>slob ma'i mtshan nyid kyi le'u</i>
15	<i>tantrōktatattvākṣaraparānīdārśana</i> , <i>[rgyud la] gsungs pa'i de kho na nyid kyi yi ge'i tshogs nges par bstan pa</i>
16	<i>upāyanirdeśa</i> , <i>thabs nges par bstan pa</i>
17	<i>vajrajñānābhiṣekavidhi</i> , <i>rdo rje'i ye shes kyi dbang bskur ba'i cho ga</i>
18	<i>prabhāvanirdeśo nāma adhimātrendriyavidhāna</i> , <i>mthu nges par bstan pa dang dbang po mchog rnam legs par spyod pa</i>
19	<i>madhyendriyavidhinirdeśa</i> , <i>dbang po 'bring po bstan pa</i>
20	<i>mṛdvindriyanirdeśa</i> , <i>tha ma bstan pa</i>
[21]	<i>[upasaṃhāra, nye bar sbyor ba]</i>

15 & 17). As will become clear from the table of contents and synopsis below, the JS follows a kind of structure familiar from philosophical treatises: namely, an opening with a summary of points; the so-called *uddeśa* (chapter 1); followed by the *nirdeśa* section, which contains the presentation and refutation of a number of rival arguments (chapters 2–7), the establishment of his own position (chapters 8–17), and the support of arguments through authoritative scriptures (chapters 15 and 17). The last three chapters are dedicated to the three types of practitioners with superior, mediocre, and lesser capacities. With some differences in the sources for the JS, its chapters can tentatively be labelled, as in Table 1.⁹

9. Apart from minor differences resulting from different orthography and scribal errors, the most significant divergence is with respect to the name of the first chapter, which, according to the Tibetan, should be *mahāmudrānirdeśa*. (Tib. *phyag rgya chen po bstan pa*) instead of *tattvanirdeśa*. Further worth mentioning here are the differences between the Sanskrit and Tibetan titles in chapters eight and fifteen. In chapter eight, the *pūnyajñānasamḥārāprāptiyupāya*, one would

The main subject-matter of the JS is, without any doubt, the Great Seal (Skt. *mahāmudrā*, Tib. *phyag rgya chen po*). A relatively recent description of the text is published in Szántó (2015) wherein the work is described as follows:

The *Jñānasiddhi* (Accomplishment of [Nondual] Gnosis; ed. Bhattacharyya, 1929, 31–100; Rinpoche & Dwivedi, 1987, 89–158; *Ye shes grub pa*; D 2219/ P 3063) is confessedly a practical manual, but it is much more than that, as the author frequently digresses into supportive philosophical discussions, such as the Yogācāra controversy of *sākāra* and *nirākāra* (i.e. whether or not the perceiving mind “takes the form” of the perceived object). The work, which is structured in 20 chapters, is no doubt early, perhaps from the 9th century CE. Unfortunately, it is also rather badly transmitted (de Jong, 1998) in relatively late paper manuscripts. Just like Padmavajra, Indrabhūti promotes an unambiguously transgressive spiritual programme: the practitioner is free to do anything provided that he maintains meditative identity with the deity. The work is imbued with the spirit and diction of the *Sarvabuddhasamāyoga-dākinījālaśaṃvara*, a scripture the author also frequently quotes and refers to (Sanderson, 2009, 155–156, 163). (Szántó 2015, 756)

The extra-canonical '*Bri gung chos mdzod* provides a very useful synopsis of the content of the JS. First, in paragraph one, it subdivides the JS into three major parts, namely the *uddēśa* section (Tib. *mdor bstan*, i.e. brief explanation) that constitutes its first chapter, the *nirdeśa* section (Tib. *rgyas par bshad*, i.e. detailed explanation) that comprises chapters two to seventeen, and in chapters eighteen to twenty a concluding section (Tib. *bsdus*) that concerns practitioners with differing capacities. The first part thus provides a paraphrastic introduction to the topics that are dealt with in more detail in the second part. Next, in paragraph two, the text provides a description of *mahāmudrā*, linking this to the titles of all seven works contained in the *Grub pa sde bdun*, thus situating these individual texts in the bigger contextual framework of *mahāmudrā* doctrine, before giving a brief definition and analysis of the term *mahāmudrā* itself. The third paragraph supplies a brief summary of chapters two to twenty. A tentative translation of parts of this passage in the '*Bri gung chos mdzod* runs as follows (B 181,3–184,6):

[§1:] In this way, [to sum up], the first chapter in the *Jñānasiddhi* gives the brief explanation of *mahāmudrā* by means of ascertainment. The [following] sixteen chapters, [i.e. chapters two to seventeen], give the extensive explanation by means of the two, the removal of [possible] doubts [in chapters two to seven] and the establishing of the way how things actually are [in chapters eight to seventeen]. The last three chapters, [i.e. chapters eighteen to twenty], conclude with the practice of those three [types of practitioners] with superior, mediocre and lesser faculties. In this way the twenty chapters are taught.¹⁰

rather expect the Tibetan to read *bsod nams dang ye shes kyi tshogs thob pa'i thabs*. In chapter fifteen, on the other hand, the canonically transmitted Tibetan translation omits *tantra* (Tib. *rgyud*), which might have dropped out in the course of the transmission of the text, while the extra-canonical versions attest *gsang ba'i* and *sangs rgyas pa'i*, which seem to be attempts to correct the chapter title. Careful reassessment of the JS will possibly reveal which of these chapter titles are more original.

10. [§1:] *de ltar ye shes grub pa las le'u dang pos phyag rgya chen po gtan la dbab pa'i sgo nas mdor bstan // le'u bcu drug gis dogs pa'i mtha' dqag pa dang yin lugs kyi tshul bzhaq pa gnyis kyi sgo nas rgyas par*

(...)

[§3:] The second chapter refutes [those who] accept meditation with form (*gzugs su bsgom pa*, Skt. *rūpabhāvanā*) as *mahāmudrā* practice. In this way, the third chapter refutes [those who] accept meditation with a concept [of cognition] endowed with aspects as *mahāmudrā*. The fourth chapter refutes [those who] accept meditation with a concept [of cognition] without aspects as *mahāmudrā*. The fifth chapter refutes [those who] accept ‘dull cultivation’ (*rmongs pa'i bsgom pa*, Skt. *mūḍhabhāvanā*) as *mahāmudrā*.¹¹ The sixth chapter refutes [those who] accept that non-conceptuality by means of inhalation and exhalation is *mahāmudrā*. The seventh chapter refutes [those who] accept bliss with outflows (*zag bcas kyi bde ba*), such as the bliss through the union of the two sexual organs as the path of *mahāmudrā*.¹²

In this way, having removed the misguided aims on the side of wisdom by the[se] six chapters, now the misguided aims on the side of means should be cleared away. This Great Seal is the gnosis that is the realisation of [dynamic] emptiness, the mode of abiding [of all phenomena]. [In the following chapters,] the mistake in thinking that there is nothing else but the profound meditation on reality alone as a means of realising it is refuted:¹³

‘Beings of little intellect with little merit and little heroic effort, how do they attain the supreme knowledge of all *tathāgatas*?’¹⁴

By this and so forth the eighth chapter teaches the section on the increase of the [two] accumulations of merit and wisdom. One may wonder, how it is not perceived as contradictory that in some scriptures killing and the enjoyment of desires and so forth are taught as sins, while these are taught as wholesome in others. The ninth chapter about the correct knowledge of the production and destruction of merit and demerit teaches that it is by the power of intention. In some [scriptures] the ‘five meats’, the ‘five nectars’ and so on are taught as not suitable to be eaten. As they are taught in others [as suitable] to become accomplished, one may wonder how the two

bshad || le'u tha ma gsum gyis dbang po rab 'bring tha ma gsum gyis nyams len du bsdus ste [bsdus te corr.] bsdus ste B | de ltar le'u nyi shu bstan to ||

11. It seems that a statement regarding the actual content of the fourth chapter has dropped out. What is given as the content of chapter four in B is in fact the *mūḍhabhāvanā*, which should be the content of chapter five. No mention of chapter five (*le'u lnga pas*) is contained in B. This corruption can be explained as a simple case of eye-skip, because of the similarity of the contents of the two sentences.
12. [§3:] *le'u gnyis pas gzugs su bsgom pa [bsgom pa em.] bsgom pas B | phyag rgya chen po'i bsgom du 'dod pa dgag || de bzhin du le'u gsum pas rnam bcas kyi rtog bsgom phyag rgya chen por 'dod pa dgag || le'u bzhi pas rnam med kyi rtog bsgom phyag rgya chen por 'dod pa dgag [rnam med kyi rtog bsgom phyag rgya chen por 'dod pa dgag conj.] om. B (eye-skip) || le'u lnga pas [le'u lnga pas conj.] om. B | rmongs pa'i bsgom pa phyag rgya chen por 'dod pa dgag || le'u drug pas dbugs 'byung ngub la brten pa'i mi rtog pa phyag rgya chen po yin 'dod pa dgag || le'u bdun pas dbang po gnyis sbyor gyis bde ba sogs zag bcas kyi bde ba phyag rgya chen po'i lam du [183] 'dod pa dgag ||*
13. *de ltar le'u drug gis shes rab kyi phyogs kyi [phyogs kyi corr.] phyogs gyi B | gol sa'i dgos pa rnams bsal nas | da ni thabs kyi phyogs kyi gol sa'i dgos pa rnams bsal bar bya ste | phyag rgya chen 'di gnas lugs stong pa nyid rtogs pa'i ye shes yin la | de rtogs pa'i thabs la ni de nyid 'ba' zhig bsgom pa zab mod kyi gzhan gyis ni ma yin no bsam pa'i log de dgag pa la |*
14. *sems can blo gros chung ba dang || bsod nams chung zhing brtson zhen rnams || de bzhin gshegs pa thams cad kyi || ye shes mchog rnams ci ltar thob ||* This is a quote of JS 8.3, reading in its Skt. original *paritābuddhayaḥ sattvā alpapunyālpavīryakāḥ | katham te prāpnuyur jñānam sarvatāthāgataṁ param ||8.3||*.

are not contradictory. Then, after having taught what is to be accepted or rejected for those who have concepts of the object and subject of grasping, the tenth chapter teaches that there is no contradiction for being the cause of accomplishment in respect to those who possess the means. Since it is taught in particular that a consort and so on is fit to be approached and that a sister is not fit to be approached [for sexual union], while in some [scriptures] it is [taught] with regard to mother and sister,¹⁵ one may wonder how also that practice would be not contradictory; the eleventh chapter teaches the non-distinction of what is fit or unfit as regards those who possess the means, because these attributes of what is fit to be approached and what is not fit to be approached are mere worldly labels in regard to something that has no inherent nature. In this way, having gone through the four chapters which have as their purpose the accumulations of merit and knowledge as the cause of the '[three] bodies' and '[five] knowledges' [of the *tathāgatas*], and which are cutting off the possible erroneous aims towards these, and having likewise taught the (possible) points of negation of the Great Seal by the eleventh chapter, now also the method for the ascertainment of the points of accomplishment of the Great Seal will be taught. Furthermore, the twelfth chapter teaches the correct perception of the characteristics of the dharma that is taught. Chapter thirteen teaches the correct perception of the characteristics of the teacher by whom [the dharma] is taught. And chapter fourteen teaches the correct perception of the characteristics of the disciple to whom [the dharma] is taught. Just as chapter fifteen teaches the methods, namely the extensive explanation, connecting it with the trusted scriptures (*yid ches pa'i lung*) that have the characteristic of the transmitted instructions, in that way, connecting it with the means, chapter sixteen teaches the demonstrated path that is brought to completion through what is to be accomplished. As regards the path that has been taught first, the seventeenth chapter teaches the method of initiation with the aim of maturation through it.¹⁶

15. One among the texts referred to here may be Padmavajra's *Guhyasiddhi* (cf. GS 7.13–15). On this topic, see also Krug 2018b, 264.

16. *zhes bya ba la sogs pas le'u brgyad pa ni [brgyad pa ni em.] brgyad pa B] bsod nams dang ye shes kyi tshogs rab tu 'phel ba'i le'u bshad || gsung rab rnam las la lar srog gcod dang 'dod pa la longs spyod pa la sogs sdig par bshad pa de la lar dge bar bshad pas de mi 'gal bar ci ltar bzung snyam la | bsam pa'i [bsam pa'i corr.] bsam ba'i B] dbang gis yin zhes bsod nams dang sdig pa skye 'jig yongs su shes pa'i le'u dgu pas [dgu pas em.] dgu pa B] bshad || sha lnga bdud rtsi lnga la sogs pa kha cig du ni bza' bar mi rung bar bshad la | kha cig du ni dngos grub du 'gyur bar gsungs pa gnyis ci ltar mi 'gal ba snyam na bzung ba dang / bzung ba dang 'dzin pa'i kun rtog can rnam kyi dor spang blang bshad la | thabs dang ldan pa la rnam la ni dngos grub kyi rgyur 'gyur ba mi 'gal ba le'u bcu pas bshad || chung ma sogs bgrod pa [bgrod pa em.] 'grod pa B] dang / sring mo sogs bgrod pa ma yin zhes khyad par gsungs la | kha cig du ni ma sring la | yang spyod pa ci ltar mi 'gal ba [mi 'gal ba em.] mi 'gal B] snyam pa la | de dag la bgrod pa dang bgrod pa ma yin pa'i khyad par 'jig rten gyis btags pa tsam yin pas rang bzhin med la | thabs dang ldan pa la rung mi rung gi khyad par med pa le'u bcu gcig pas [bcu gcig pas em.] bcu cig pas B] bstan to || de ltar le'u bzhi pa [184] sku dang ye shes kyi rgyur bsod nams dang ye shes kyi tshogs dgos pa dang | de'i gol sa'i dgos pa bcad pa rnam song nas | de ltar le'u bcu gcig pas [bcu gcig pas em.] bcu' B] phyag rgya chen po dgag phyogs su bshad nas | da ni phyag rgya chen po bsgrub phyogs gtan la dbab pa'i tshul du yang bshad par bya ste [bya ste corr.] byas ste B] | de yang gang ston pa chos kyi mtshan nyid dngos [dngos em.] ngos B] bzung ba ni le'u bcu gnyis pas bstan || de gang gis [gang gis em.] gang gi B] ston pa slob dpon gyi [slob dpon gyi em.] slob dpon gyis B] mtshan nyid dngos bzung ba le'u bcu gsum pas bstan || de yang gang la [gang la em.] gang gis la B] ston pa slob ma'i mtshan nyid dngos bzung ba le'u bcu bzhi pas bstan || ji ltar [ji ltar corr.] ci ltar B] bshad pa gdams pa'i mtshan nyid yid ches pa'i lung dang sbyar nas rgyas par bshad pa ni tshul le'u bco lnga pas [bco lnga pas B^{p-c}] bco lnga ++ pas B^{a-c}] bstan [bstan em.] bsten B] || de ltar bstan pa'i lam de thabs dang bcas nas bsgrubs pas mthar phyin pa [mthar phyin pa em.] mthar*

After having taught in this way the extensive explanation by the[se] sixteen chapters, as for the conclusion of the topic of the method through which the fruit is directly realized, it is taught in the eighteenth chapter that the path is completed here in this life by the one who possesses superior faculties. Chapter nineteen teaches that the path is not completed in this life, [but that] the supreme is accomplished in the intermediate state by him who possesses mediocre faculties. Chapter twenty teaches that one with inferior faculties who [practices] the Stage of Arising (*bskyed rim*, Skt. *utpattikrama*) attains awakening after a continuity of births (...).¹⁷

The significance of the JS is reflected in the relatively high number of explicit and implicit quotations of it in other works, such as in the anonymous *Subhāṣitasamgraha* (ca. eleventh century CE; ed. Bendall 1905, 9 and 45); in chapter 13 of Ratnarakṣita's commentary on the *Samvarodayatantra*, the *Padminī* (JS 1.5, 8.1cd); in the *Sekoddeśaṭikā* by Nāropā (*Paramārthasamgraha*; ed. Sferra 2006, 173), and in Rāmapāla's *Sekanirdeśapañjikā* (ed. Isaacson and Sferra 2015, 193 and 202; JS 5.6, 7.1). Also worthy of mention is the apparent influence of the JS on the *Paramākṣarajñānasiddhi* chapter of the *Vimalaprabhā*, a commentary on the *Laghukālacakratāntra*. Not only does some of the content of this last work show the influence of the JS, but its very title, *Paramākṣarajñānasiddhi*, seems to be an homage to Indrabhūti's opus.

Sources, transmission and context

As regards the transmission of the text, to our present knowledge the JS survives in Sanskrit, its original Indian language, in no fewer than one palm-leaf and at least six relatively modern 'paper' manuscripts:

1. "Ngor Codex" XXXIV 2(b):¹⁸ palm-leaf, 25 folios, complete, ca. thirteenth to fourteenth centuries;
2. National Archives Kathmandu (NAK) MS '5-45' (= NGMPP A 134/2 and A 915/3), MTM, Nepalese paper, 49 folios, complete, ca. nineteenth century;
3. "Vajrācārya Codex": MTM in private possession of M.V. Vajrācārya (= IASWR MBB-I-108 and NGMPP E 1474/4), Kathmandu, Nepalese paper, 63 folios, incomplete (5,5 folios of the JS photographed), ca. nineteenth to twentieth centuries;

phyin pha B] le'u bcu drug pas bstan || lam de ston pa la thog mar dbang gis smin dgos pas dbang bskur ba'i tshul le'u bcu bdun pas bstan ||

17. *de ltar le'u bcu drug gis rgyas par bshad bshad nas | 'bras bu mngon du byed pa'i tshul gyi don bsdu ba ni | dbang po rab kyi [rab kyi em.] rab kyi B] tshē 'dir lam mthar phyin pa le'u bco brgyad par bstan || tshē 'dir lam ma rdzogs pa bar mdor mchog 'grub pa ste dbang po 'bring gis lam le'u bcu dgu pas bstan || dbang po tha ma bskyed rim skyē ba rgyud nas 'tshang rgya ba le'u nyi shu pas bstan to ||*
18. "Ngor Codex" XXXIV 2 (b). This codex was uncovered by Rāhula Sāṅkrtyāyana at Ngor monastery in Tibet in the 1930s. Estimated from its paleographical and codicological features, it can be dated to the thirteenth to fourteenth centuries, predating all other Sanskrit witnesses by approximately five hundred years. Negatives of the photographs that were taken on behalf of Sāṅkrtyāyana are now preserved in the Bihar Research Society in Patna. Copies of these are available on microfilm in the Niedersächsische Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Göttingen (shelf-mark Xc 14/7b). The main reason that this manuscript has not received attention in academia seems to be that it had been erroneously cataloged together with "Ngor Codex" XXXIV 2 (a), a copy of the *Madhyāntavibhaṅgākārikābhāṣya*. The whereabouts of the original manuscript are not known; cf. Bandurski (1994, 40).

4. Baroda Oriental Institute MS 'B 13124': MTM, black Nepalese paper, 137 folios, complete, ca. nineteenth century;
5. National Archives Kathmandu (NAK) MS '4-71' (= NGMPP A 137/4 & A 1012/5 = Śāntarakṣita Library (CIHTS) MS '21537'), Nepalese paper, 40 folios, incomplete, ca. twentieth century;
6. Institute for the Advanced Study of World Religions (IASWR) MBB 7-4, data unknown;
7. IASWR MBB 7-5, data unknown.

The Tibetan translations of the JS is preserved under the title *Ye shes grub pa'i sgrub thabs* in all of the major canonical editions of the *bsTan 'gyur* (Tōhoku 2219, Ōtani 3063), as well as in five extra-canonically transmitted collections belonging to the 'Brug pa (1), 'Bri gung (2) and Karma bka' brgyud schools (3-5). In all likelihood, the Tibetan translation of the JS is to be dated to the late tenth to first half of the eleventh century CE.¹⁹

1. *'Brug lugs chos mdzod chen mo*, vol. 35 (ci), pp. 185-268; Kathmandu: Khams sgar gsung rab nyams gso rgyan spel khang. 200?.
2. *'Bri gung bka' brgyud chos mdzod chen mo*, vol. 1 (ka), ff. 62v-95v; Lhasa: 'Bri gung mthil dgon. 2004.
3. *Karma pa sku phreng rim byon gyi gsung 'bum phyogs bsgrigs rnam par rgyal ba dpal zhwa dmar ba'i chos sde*, vol. 36, pp. 147-220; Lhasa: dPal brtsegs bod yig dpe rnying zhib 'jug khang. 2013.
4. *Nges don phyag chen rgya gzhung dang bod gzhung*, vol. 1 (ka), pp. 237-307; Khreng tu'u: Si khron mi rigs dpe skrun khang. 2009.
5. *Nges don phyag rgya chen po'i khrid mdzod*, vol. 1 (om), pp. 123-189. New Delhi: Rtsib ri par khang. 1997.

Although the JS was not transmitted in all Indian and Tibetan sources along with the exact same body of texts, a more or less fixed collection of texts took shape in Tibet as the *Grub pa sde bdun*. As pointed out in Roger R. Jackson's introduction to the *Mahāmudrā and the bKa' brgyud tradition* (2011), the Indian sources of tantric Buddhism — and in this context in particular those texts which form the basis of the "Seven Siddhi Texts" of the Indo-Tibetan *mahāmudrā* tradition, the main philosophical-religious core of the bKa' brgyud school — are still largely untapped. The *Grub pa sde bdun* is among the authoritative collections of primary scriptures that are recognized by the various branches of the bKa' brgyud school. In addition to Benoytosh Bhattacharya's introduction to the second volume of the *Sādhnamālā* (1925, reprint 1968),²⁰ the JS should, above all, be regarded as one of the central

19. According to its Tibetan colophons, the JS was translated by the Indian scholar Śraddhākaravarman and the Tibetan monk Rin chen bzang po (958-1055 CE). Assuming its accuracy, and following the information provided by BDRC (ID: P753) and the *Treasury of Lives*, the translation can be dated to the late tenth to first half of the eleventh century. Rin chen bzang po is said to have met his teacher Śraddhākaravarman for the first time after he had left Tibet in 975 CE (see Gardner 2019, <http://treasuryoflives.org/biographies/view/Rinchen-Zangpo/10199> (accessed on 20 June 2019)).

20. Cf. Bhattacharya 1925, xxvii-xxviii, wherein Bhattacharya describes the *Guhyasamāja* as the

texts within the corpus of Indo-Tibetan *mahāmudrā* works, as it must be associated with the earlier formation of the Buddhist *tantras* in India.

As regards the transmission of the JS in Indian (including Nepalese) sources in the form of multiple-text-manuscripts (MTMs), it has to be noted that the evidence for the formation of a rather fixed set of tantric texts together with which the JS has been transmitted is relatively young. None of these witnesses seems to predate the eighteenth century.²¹ Table 2 shows the texts with which Indrabhūti's JS is transmitted in these multiple-text-manuscripts.

Evidence for the formation of a more or less fixed text-corpus within which the JS was transmitted in Tibet, on the other hand, is somewhat older and should be dated at least to the early fifteenth century.²² It is rather likely that the Tibetan translation of the JS found its way into the *bsTan 'Gyur* via an extra-canonical collection, such as the *Grub pa sde bdun* contained in the first volume of the *Phyag rgya chen po'i rgya gzhung* (short: *rGya gzhung*), The Indian *Mahāmudrā* Anthology compiled by the 7th Karmapa Chos grags rgya mtsho (1454–1506 CE), as well as in volume one of the *'Bri gung chos mdzod*.²³ The arrangement of the works contained in the *rGya gzhung* is presented in Table 3 (p. 252).²⁴

most central and important starting point of the emergence of the tantric scriptures in Indian Buddhism, in the context of which he emphasizes the relevance of the *Guhyasiddhi* as well as the JS and other early works.

21. In this context it is worth mentioning that all of the seven texts contained in the *Grub pa sde bdun* are cited along with other tantric works in the above-mentioned *Subhāṣitasamgraha* (SS), presumably dating back to the eleventh century CE. The oldest known Sanskrit MS of the SS may be dated to the fifteenth century (see Bendall 1905, 1).
22. While the JS itself, and also other texts of the *Grub pa sde bdun*, must have been translated already at an early stage (see n.19), the collection itself seems to have been well known and studied from at least the early fifteenth century onwards, as accounts in the *nam thars* of masters such as Śākya mchog ldan (1428–1507 CE), Go rams pa bsod nams seng ge (1429–1489 CE), the seventh Karmapa Chos grags rgya mtsho (1454–1504 CE), Padma dkar po (1527–1592 CE), Kun dga' rnam rgyal (1567–1629 CE), and Tāranātha kun dga' snying po (1575–1634 CE) clearly show (this information has been obtained via the eText library of the BDRC).
23. The *rGya gzhung* is contained in all three collections of the Karma bka' brgyud school (no. 3–5 above). For a study of it, see Mathes 2011 and Krug 2020. Further, it may be noted here that the first two volumes of the *'Bri gung bka' brgyud chos mdzod chen mo* are to a great extent identical to the *rGya gzhung*.
24. The information in Table 3 is based on the *Karma pa sku phreng rim byon gyi gsung 'bum phyogs bsgrigs rnam par rgyal ba dpal zhwa dmar ba'i chos sde* (BDRC: W3PD1288). In this collection the *Grub pa sde bdun* is preceded by two short texts which do not belong to the collection under which the JS is listed. These are the *rGyud kyi rgyal po dpal rnyog pa med pa* (D 414) and a corresponding commentary, the *dPal rnyog pa med pa'i rnal 'byor gyi rgyud kyi rgyal po chen po'i dka' 'grel* (P 2334) by Kumāracandra. Additionally, the *Grub pa sde bdun* is followed by three further texts, two of which are connected to the *Sahajasiddhi* (*Lhan cig skyes grub*, P 3067). These are the **Sahajasiddhirāja* (*Lhan cig skyes grub rgyal po*), a corresponding commentary, the **Sahajasiddhi-paddhati* (*Lhan cig skyes grub pa'i gzhung 'grel*, P 3108), and the *Śrītatvasiddhi* (*dPal de kho na nyid grub pa*, P 3109) ascribed here to Keralipa. Notably the first two works listed here deserve special attention with regard to the JS, since those texts are ascribed to Indrabhūti and Lakṣmīṅkarā, respectively. With fewer details, the following list is also given in Mathes (2011, 94n.16). A comparative table showing the arrangement of the *Grub pa sde bdun* in the different Tibetan collections is contained in Krug 2018b, 424–425. See further *rGya gzhung dkar chag* fol. 21v₆–22v₁ and *Bu ston gsan yig* (p.115, II. 4–7).

Table 2 Multiple-Text-Manuscripts.

Title	Author	MTMs ^a
<i>Jñānasiddhi</i>	Indrabhūti	A 915/3 (15v ₁₂ -29v ₃), E 1474/4 (1v ₁ -6r ₁) ^b , Baroda MS '13124' (37r ₆ -71r ₃), A 137/4 (21r ₄ -41r ₆)
<i>Guhyasiddhi</i>	Padmavajra	A 915/3 (1v ₁ -15r ₂), Baroda MS '13124' (1v ₁ -35r ₃), A 137/4* (2r ₁ -19v ₉)
<i>Advayasiddhi</i>	Lakṣmīṅkarā	A 915/3 (15r ₂ -v ₁₂), Baroda MS '13124' (35r ₄ -37r ₆), A 137/4 (19v ₉ -21r ₄)
<i>Prajñopāyavinīśayāsiddhi</i>	Anaṅgavajra	A 915/3 (29v ₆ -34r ₂), E 1474/4 (6r ₆ -17r ₂ & 62v ₅ -63v ₇), Baroda MS '13124' (71r ₃ -82r ₇ & 120r ₅ -137v ₄), A 137/4 (41r ₆₋₁₀)
<i>Sahajāsiddhi</i>	Śrīḍombīheruka	A 915/3 (34r ₂ -35r ₄), E 1474/4 (17r ₂ -19v ₂), Baroda MS '13124' (82r ₇ -85r ₁)
<i>Tattvasiddhi</i>	Śāntarakṣita	A 915/3 (35r ₄ -44v ₈), E 1474/4 (26r ₄ -43r ₆), Baroda MS '13124' (91v ₄ -108r ₄)
<i>Acintyādvayakramopadeśa</i>	Śrīkuddālapāda	A 915/3 (44v ₈ -47v ₃), E 1474/4 (43r ₆ -49v ₆), Baroda MS '13124' (108r ₄ -114v ₇)
<i>Caturmudrā(nvaya) / Samayamudrā</i>	Nāgārjuna	A 915/3 (47v ₃ -48v ₁₀), E 1474/4 (49v ₆ -53r ₇), Baroda MS '13124' (115r ₁ -118r ₂)
<i>Sekaniṛdeśa / Sekaniṛṇaya</i>	Advayavajra aka. Maitrīpa	A 915/3 (48v ₁₁ -49v ₉), E 1474/4 (53r ₇ -55v ₃), Baroda MS '13124' (118r ₂ -120r ₃)
<i>Vyaktabhāvanūgatatattvasiddhi</i>	Vilāsavajra	E 1474/4 (19v ₂ -26r ₄ & 55v ₅ -62v ₃), Baroda MS '13124' (85r ₁ -91v ₄)

Notes to table

a. NGMPP A 915/3 = A 134/2 (NAK 5-45); NGMPP E 1474/4 = IASWR MBB-I-108; NGMPP A 137/4 & A 1012/5 form a single codex, the latter is marked here by an asterisk. The MSS IASWR MBB 7-4 and MBB 7-5 are not available at present.

b. Parts of chapters 16 and 17-20 are contained in this MTM. It is possible that the missing folios of this MTM, at least some of them, have been mixed up with the MSS that have been preserved on microfilm by the former IASWR with the numbers MBB-I-103, MBB-I-104 and MBB-I-105.

Table 3 Arrangement of the *Grub pa sde bdun* in the *rGya gzhung*.

Title	Page no.	Tōhoku, Ōtani
<i>gSang ba grub pa</i> (Skt. <i>Guhyasiddhi</i> , Padmavajra)	37–121	2217, 3061
<i>Thabs dang shes rab rnam par gtan la dbab pa grub pa</i> (Skt. <i>Prajñopāyavinīścayasiddhi</i> , Anaṅgavajra)	121–147	2218, 3062
<i>Ye shes grub pa</i> (Skt. <i>Jñānasiddhi</i> , Indrabhūti)	147–220	2219, 3063
<i>gNyi med grub pa</i> (Skt. <i>Advayasiddhi</i> , Lakṣmīṅkarā)	220–225	2220, 3064
<i>gSang ba'i gsang ba chen po de kho na nyid kyi man ngag</i> (Skt. <i>*Guhyamahāguhyatattvopadeśa</i> , Dārikapa)	225–228	2221, 3065
<i>dNgos po gsal ba'i rjes su 'gro ba'i de kho na nyid grub pa</i> (Skt. <i>Vyaktabhāvānugatattvasiddhi</i> , Vilāsavajra)	228–244	2222, 3066
<i>dPal lhan cig skyes pa grub pa</i> (Skt. <i>Śrīśahajasiddhi</i> , Ḍombiheruka)	244–250	2223, 3067

The close study of the JS as part of the above-mentioned collections not only promises further findings with respect to the development of the *mahāmudrā* doctrine, but also offers important insights into the formation of these text-collections. We not only must assume that the JS has to be contextualized together with the works with which it circulated, but also that its context and function might not be sufficiently understood without the careful study of this larger textual framework. Thus, for example, many verses in Lakṣmīṅkarā's *Advayasiddhi* as well as Padmavajra's *Guhyasiddhi* reveal a strong relation to the content of the JS.²⁵ Hence, a comprehensive understanding of any of the texts listed above to a certain degree depends also on the thorough understanding of the other texts in its respective collection. The careful study of these works and their relationship with each other remains a desideratum.

An explanation linking these texts with each other, insofar as each of these illuminates specific aspects of the *mahāmudrā* doctrine, is found in the omitted section of the above quoted passage from the *'Bri gung chos mdzod* which further reads:

[§2:] Further, as for [the term] *mahāmudrā*, it is the 'Great Seal', the nature of which is completely void of all concepts of the object and subject of grasping, qualified by common and uncommon methods (*thun mong dang thun mong ma yin pa'i thabs*). [It is dynamic] emptiness endowed with the finest of all forms (*rnam kun mchog ldan*

25. In addition to those similarities that have been pointed out by Shendge (1964) in her edition and translation of the *Advayasiddhi* (AS) based on Baroda MS '13124', the following instances seem noteworthy in relation to the JS: AS 6 ≈ JS 1.15; AS 7 ≈ JS 1.13, 89; AS 12 ≈ JS 1.70; AS 13 ≈ JS 16.9 (also HT II.iii.41); AS 14 ≈ JS 1.77–78 (also HT I.ii.44); AS 15 ≈ JS 1.79, 84; AS 17 ≈ JS 1.14 (also GST 16.61–62; HT II.iii. 29–30.); AS 19 ≈ JS 1.16; AS 20 ≈ JS 1.18 (also HT II.iii.41); AS 21 ≈ JS 1.78; AS 22 ≈ JS 1.82. Moreover, the AS also shows a strong relation to the *Guhyasiddhi* (GS) with regard to which see Gerloff and Schott 2021. The exact relation of the GS to the JS awaits further research.

gyi stong nyid),²⁶ the natural luminosity from the beginning,²⁷ the subject (*yul can*, lit. 'object possessor') which is supreme unchanging bliss,²⁸ the great bliss which is cognition without outflows.²⁹ It shines forth for the sake of leaving behind the paths. [It is] the 'vajra-knowledge' (*rdo rje ye shes*, Skt. *vajrajñāna*) without the division of both, space and time; [it is] the 'Gnosis-Accomplishment' (*Ye shes grub pa*, Skt. *Jñānasiddhi*) because of the accomplishment of the 'state of union' (*zung du 'jug pa grub pas*, Skt. *yuganaddhasiddhi*); [it is] the 'Accomplishment through Ascertainment [by Wisdom and Means]' (*gTan la dbab pa grub pa*, Skt. *Prajñopāyavinīśayasiddhi*) because of the actualisation through accomplishment by the method of ascertainment by way of means and wisdom; [it is] the 'Secret Accomplishment' (*gSang ba grub pa*, Skt. *Guhyasiddhi*) because it is not the range for those who have concepts of object and subject; [it is] the 'Non-dual Accomplishment' (*gNyes su med grub pa*, Skt. *Advayasiddhi*) as it is the reality without a duality of means and wisdom; [it is] the 'Co-emergent Accomplishment' (*Lhan cig skyes grub*, Skt. *Sahajasiddhi*) because it is the culmination co-arising with the goal; [it is] the 'Inconceivable' (*bSam mi khyab*, Skt. *acintya*)³⁰ because it is not cognisable through an intellect that has concepts of object and subject of grasping; [it is] the 'Accomplishment of Reality' (*De kho na nyid grub pa*, Skt. *Tattvasiddhi*) because of the direct realisation of non-dual gnosis of reality that is the mode of the abiding of all phenomena. Since the mode of abiding of all phenomena does not go beyond (*mi 'da' ba las*) what is sealed by a non-dual union, [therefore] the mind of a Buddha does not go beyond what is sealed, namely what is perceived / the extent which is perceived (*gzigs pa'i rgya las*) through non-dual gnosis (*gnyis su med pa'i ye shes kyis*; Skt. *advayajñāna*); since it is both great and a seal with self-realisation (*rang gi rtogs pas phyag rgya yang yin la chen po yang yin pas*), it is the "Great Seal" (*phyag rgya chen po*, Skt. *mahāmudrā*).³¹ Those [points] are expressed as the characteristics of Vajrasattva in [their] direct meaning, also called 'Wisdom-Body' (*ye shes kyi sku*, Skt. *jñānakāya*). As regards the accomplishment, it becomes twofold by the division into the accomplishment from the beginning (*gdong nas grub pa*) and the accomplishment after having been accomplished anew (*bsgrubs nas gsar du grub pa*). For this reason, the [accomplished ones] — for whom the sphere of concepts of object and subject does

26. The author must have had in mind something like Skt. *sarvākāravāropetā śūnyatā*, which is found in many Buddhist texts such as, for example, in Saroruhavajra's *Hevajrasādhyanopāyikā* (ed. Gerloff 2020, Part 1, 101).
27. Here the author must have had in mind something corresponding to Skt. *āditah prakṛtiprabhāsvara(tā)*, which is found in, e.g., Ratnākaraśānti's *Guṇavatī ad Mahāmāyātānta* 1.10 (ed. Rinpoche and Dwivedi 1992, 7–8).
28. This most likely refers to the Skt. term *paramāṅśarasukha*, which is found in various tantric works, such as, e.g., in the *Sekoddeśa* and **ṭikā* (ed. Sferra 2006).
29. Corresponding Sanskrit terms would be *mahāsukha* and *anāśravajñāna* which are found in many tantric texts.
30. This expression is to be understood as a reference to the *Acintyādvayakramopadeśa* by Kuddālapāda (ed. Rinpoche and Dwivedi 1987, 193–208).
31. This last statement evidently is the analysis of the translation of the Skt. compound *mahāmudrā* (Tib. *phyag rgya chen po*) as a *karmadhāraya*, i.e. that which is both *phyag rgya* (Skt. *mudrā*) as well as *chen po* (Skt. *mahā*). A similar analysis is given in the *Sekoddeśaṭīkā* and *Amṛtakaṇīkā* ad 4.93: *mahatī cāsau mudrā ca mahāmudrā, mahattvaṃ punar asyāḥ sarvākāravāropetatvaṃ na pradeśikatvaṃ* (ed. Sferra 2006, 169). It is possible that the author also had in mind the Tibetan meaning of *rgya* in the sense of extent or vastness, which does not seem to be reflected in the Sanskrit 10th class root *mud* from which the word *mudrā* commonly is derived.

not exist – gradually have removed the errors with regard to these.³²

In view of the information given in the above translated passage, the reassessment of the JS should take into consideration those texts with which it has been transmitted in any of the different collections. Further, the exact content that is supposedly represented by the JS should be analysed also with regard to the various aspects of the *mahāmudrā* definition laid out above. This approach will certainly reveal further insights into the different aspects of the *mahāmudrā* teachings and their interrelation.

Previous scholarship

The beginning of the ‘modern’ academic exploration of the teachings in Indrabhūti’s JS is marked by the publication of the *editio princeps* by Benoytosh Bhattacharya, in Gaekwad’s Oriental Series XLIV (pp. 31–100) in 1929. This first Sanskrit edition, published together with an edition of Anaṅgavajra’s *Prajñopāyavinīśayāsiddhi* under the title *Two Vajrayāna Works*, is based primarily on the multiple-text-manuscript ‘B 13124’ archived in the Baroda Oriental Institute, as well as two copies of this MTM. Although this manuscript, written on Nepalese paper, is not dated, due to palaeographical and codicological features it can be placed with all due caution in the nineteenth century, i.e. more than a millennium after the author’s lifetime.³³ In addition to the annotated Sanskrit edition, Bhattacharya’s publication contains

32. [§2:] *de yang phyag rgya chen po ni thun mong dang thun mong ma yin pa'i* [ma yin pa'i corr.] *ma yan pa'i B* | *thabs kyiis* [kyiis em.] *kyi B* | *khyad par du byas pa'i bzung ba* [bzung ba B] here and in the following, understand: *gzung ba* | *dang 'dzin pa'i rnam par rtog pa thams cad dang bral ba yul stong gzugs phyag rgya chen po'o* || *rnam kun mchog ldan gyi* [gyi em.] *gyis B* | *stong nyid dam* | *gdod nas rang bzhin gyis 'od gsal ba dang* | *yul can mchog tu* [tu corr.] *du B* | *mi 'gyur ba'i bde ba'am* | *bde chen zag pa med pa'i ye shes sam* | *lam gyi spangs pa'i don gyis 'od gsal te* | *yul yun gnyis dbyer med pa rdo rje ye shes* | *zung du 'jug pa grub pas ye shes grub pa dang* | *thabs dang* [182] *shes rab kyi lam gyis gtan la dbab pa'i tshul gyis grub pas mngon du gyur pa'i phyir gtan la dbab pa grub pa dang* | *bzung 'dzin gyi* [gyi em.] *gyis B* | *rnam par rtog pa'i yul ma yin pa'i phyir gsang ba grub pa dang* | *thabs dang shes rab gnyis su med pa'i de kho na nyid yin par gnyis su med* [gnyis su med corr.] *gnyis med B* | *grub pa dang* | *don gyis lhan cig skyes pa mthar thug pa yin pas* [yin pas corr.] *yin bas B* | *lhan cig skyes grub dang* | *bzung 'dzin gyi rnam par rtog pa'i blos ma rig pas na* [ma rig pas na em.] *ma reg pas na B* | *bsam mi khyab dang* | *chos thams cad kyi gnas lugs de kho na nyid gnyis su med pa'i ye shes kyi mngon du byas pas de kho na nyid grub pa dang* | *chos thams cad kyi gnas lugs gnyis su med pa'i zung 'jug gis rgya las mi 'da' ba las* | *sangs rgyas kyi thugs gnyis su med pa'i ye shes kyiis gzigs pa'i rgya las mi 'da' ba ste rang gi rtogs pas phyag rgya yang yin la chen po yang yin pas phyag rgya chen po'o* || *de dag ni nges don gyis rdo rje sems dpa'i mtshan gyis rnam grangs te ye shes kyi sku zhes kyang bya'o* || *grub pa ni gdong nas grub pa dang bsgrubs nas gsar du grub pa'i dbye bas gnyis su 'gyur ro* || *des na de dag ni bzung 'dzin gyi* [gyi em.] *gyis B* | *rtog pa'i yul ma yin pas 'khrul pa mams rim pa bzhin du dgag par mdzad do* [mdzad do em.] *mdzad de B* ||

For further classifications of the content of the JS, especially within the corpus of the *Grub pa sde bdun*, as well as consideration of the meaning of the word *siddhi*, see Krug 2018b, 6–7, 150, in which the author argues for *siddhi* as ‘proof of attainment’. To what extent this understanding applies to the JS needs to be further investigated in the course of careful reassessment of the work and its contents.

33. In her edition of the AS, Shendge (1964, 12) dates the manuscript to ‘round about the latter half of the 14th century (from the data given by Bendall, in the Cambridge Catalogue of Buddhist Sanskrit MSS, Cambridge, 1883)’. The script with its typical ‘medial’ ‘e’ and ‘o’ consisting in a wavy line (*prṣṭhamātra*), the characteristic style of the initial ‘i’ and other features can indeed be classified as ‘Newari’. Nonetheless, when taking into consideration the script together with the material of the writing support it is rather feasible to assume that the manuscript originated in Nepal sometime around the nineteenth century CE.

a rough summary of contents, which is however limited to the first chapter of the JS. He did not consult the Tibetan translation of Indrabhūti's work.

Another edition of the JS, making use also of the translation contained in the Tibetan Canon, was published in 1987 by Samdhong Rinpoche and Vrajvallabh Dwivedi as part of the so-called *Guhyādi-Aṣṭasiddhi-Saṅgraha* (1987, 93–191). In addition to consulting other, relatively 'modern', textual witnesses and the partial consideration of the Tibetan translation, the value of this edition is due mainly to the inclusion of other works preserved in these manuscripts together with which the JS has been transmitted. Referring to these previously published editions of the JS, J.W. de Jong published text-critical notes in 1998 (95–106), which improve upon many, but by no means all, of the problems contained in these editions. His notes are based on the readings reported in these editions and on the translation contained in the Tibetan canon.

To date, the JS has not been translated into English in its entirety. Select passages of the JS are treated and translated in studies prepared by Adam C. Krug, particularly in his dissertation *The Seven Siddhi Texts* (2018b) submitted to the University of California in 2018.³⁴ An initial epistemological study of the contents of the JS was published by Adam C. Krug in 2018 (Krug 2018a, 159–164), and a first study of the Indian manuscripts as a possible forerunner of the so-called 'Seven Siddhi Texts' was conducted in the course of his dissertation (Krug 2018b, Part 3, 365–509). In another publication, Krug investigates 'various Tibetan formulations of the *Grub pa sde bdun* as a corpus and the role this corpus played in the Mahāmudrā polemical literature of Sa skya and Bka' brgyud authors from the fifteenth to seventeenth centuries' (Krug 2020, 91). These studies make up the most important contributions to recent scholarly discourse regarding the contextual framework of the JS and the origins and development of the *Grub pa sde bdun*.

Significance of a new edition, in-depth analysis, and English translation

Despite the undeniable progress that the study of Buddhist and non-Buddhist tantric traditions has made in the past few decades, the exact date and authorship of the JS still remain uncertain. The matter can, in this regard, at best be described as

34. Translations of several passages are contained in Krug (2018a) and Krug (2018b). While the former contains excerpts from chapters 12 (12.1–8) and 15 (15.46–53), the latter comprises translations of verses 1.6–11, 1.14, 6.1–8, 8.19, 9.1–4, 9.20–23, 9.26–27, 9.30–33, 10.3–8, 13.1–8, 13.13–16, 17.26–31, 17.33, 18.1–7 (= SBS 5.97–105) and 18.15–18 (= SBS 5.87–90). In Krug (2018b), the editions of the Sanskrit text and its canonical Tibetan translation were taken into account and some of the 'modern' manuscripts were consulted. Unfortunately, Krug was not aware of the new evidence that had come to light in the recent past, with the help of which these translations could have been improved significantly, as for example in verse 9.3 where one should read *apreyādīny* with the palm-leaf MS (fol. 12r₆₋₇) and the Tibetan *btung mi bya sogs* (P fol. 51b₆, et al.), instead of *apriyādīny* as printed in the editions. Verses 1.32–37 are cited in Jamgön Kongtrül Lodrö Tayé's *Shes bya mtha' yas pa'i rgya mtsho* (*The Treasury of Knowledge*), which was translated from Tibetan into English in recent years (Jamgön Kongtrül Lodrö Tayé [2007, 225f.]). Verses 1.32 and 17.4–5 are treated in Krug (2020) in the context of the later debates between Sa skya pa and Bka' brgyud masters. Verse 1.15 is translated in Evola (1992, 59). Chapter 15, as already pointed out by J.W. de Jong (1998, 105), is translated into Japanese by Hisao Takahashi (*Buzan kyōgaku taikai kiyō* No. 5. 1977, (1) 114 – (16) 99).

extremely complex and opaque. These uncertainties are only to be resolved by the further study of the surviving texts, foremost the *Jñānasiddhi* and its contents itself.

The remarkable fact that Indrabhūti's JS has been edited twice in the past hundred years (Bhattacharya 1929, Rinpoche and Dwivedi 1987), and that these editions have received further comment (de Jong 1998), reflects the high status attributed to the JS since the early phase of the academic study of tantric Buddhist texts. Yet, these published editions show serious shortcomings in several respects. Cautious evaluation of the available textual evidence shows, on the one hand, that the variants mentioned in the editions are both incomplete and often incorrect and misleading. On the other hand, we find that significant improvements can be made on the basis of the available palm-leaf manuscript discovered by Rāhula Śāṅkṛtyāyana at Ngor monastery in Tibet. It predates all other Sanskrit witnesses by roughly five hundred years and had not been consulted in any of the aforementioned publications. Many of these improvements find not only support in the Tibetan translation of the JS, the oldest surviving witness of Indrabhūti's work, but also the quality of the Tibetan text can be improved significantly on account of the hitherto neglected extra-canonically transmitted versions. It is thus possible to improve the overall quality of the Sanskrit and Tibetan editions substantially, including passages that had not been available in Sanskrit previously. Moreover, new data regarding contents, context, and the transmission history of the JS, its author, and the *Grub pa sde bdun* can be provided.³⁵ On the basis of these testimonia, it is now possible to trace the history of the transmission of the JS back to the point at which the older sources, i.e. the palm-leaf MS and Tibetan translation, began to diverge from the younger sources which, up to now, have formed the basis of the available editions.

Further study of the JS should include careful philological treatment of all of these surviving textual witnesses, and a detailed analysis of the philosophical positions and soteriological practices contained therein. The examination of the passages of the *Sarvatathāgatatattvasaṃgraha*, *Guhyasamājatantra* and the *Sarvabuddhasamāyoga* which are cited and in parts extensively commented on by Indrabhūti promise to reveal further insights into the history of the development of Tantric Buddhism in India. Having been organized, transmitted and contextualized within different extra-canonical collections of the bKa' brgyud schools, the JS also offers valuable insights into the Tibetan literary history prior to the sixteenth century.

To sum up, the careful re-editing of the JS, together with an annotated English translation, will make available a text that was paramount in the earlier formation

35. This has become evident in the process of re-editing the first seven chapters and select passages in other parts. Based on this examination, it can be noted that in some places, e.g. in chapters two, three, seventeen and eighteen, the palm-leaf manuscript contains verses that appear to have been lost in the course of the later textual transmission of the Sanskrit text but which are still present in the Tibetan translation (cp. 2.21–22, 3.19–20, 17.33, 18.18/19 *et al.*). Based on the number of improvements made in these chapters, numerous other significant corrections can be expected for the remaining parts of the text. It is our hope to be able to publish the entire JS in the next years within the scope of the DFG funded research project at the University of Hamburg, including the re-editing of the text and production of an annotated English translation, together with a comprehensive introduction, in-depth analysis of its contents and contextualization of the JS in later textual corpora.

of the tantric scriptures, a text of great interest to both the scholarly community as well as the practitioners of Tantric Buddhism. The careful reassessment of the JS will contribute tremendously to our knowledge of the development of Buddhist tantric literature in the transition phase of the predominance of the *Yogatantras* (STTS) to that of the *Mahāyoga-* (GST) and later *Yoginītantras* (SBS). Thus, it will serve a more nuanced understanding of the Indo-Tibetan *mahāmudrā* doctrine and its evolution.

Abbreviations

AS	<i>Advayasiddhi</i> of Lakṣmīṅkarā
B	' <i>Bri gung bka'</i> <i>brgyud chos mdzod chen mo</i> , vol. 1 (ka)
BDRC	Buddhist Digital Resource Center, successor of the TBRC, the Tibetan Buddhist Resource Center
CIHTS	Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies
D	Hakuju UI <i>et al.</i> (eds). 1934. <i>The Tibetan Tripiṭaka – Tōhoku University Catalogue of the sDe-dGe Edition of the Tibetan Sacred Canon (bKa'-gyur and bsTan-'gyur)</i> – <i>A Complete Catalogue of the Tibetan Buddhist Canons</i> . Sendai: Tōhoku University.
DFG	Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft
fol.	folio(s)
GS	<i>Guhyasiddhi</i> of Padmavajra
GST	<i>Guhyasamājatantra</i>
HT	<i>Hevajratantra</i>
IASWR	Institute for the Advanced Study of World Religions
JS	<i>Jñānasiddhi</i> of Indrabhūti
MS(S)	manuscript(s)
MTM	Multiple-Text-Manuscript
NAK	National Archives Kathmandu
NGMPP	Nepalese-German Manuscript Preservation Project, predecessor of the NGM-CP, the Nepalese-German Manuscript Cataloguing Project
P	Ōtani University. 1965–1997. <i>A Comparative Analytical Catalogue of the Tanjur Division of the Tibetan Tripiṭaka</i> . Kyōtō: Ōtani University.
SBS	<i>Sarvabuddhasamāyogaḍākinījālaśaṃvara</i>
Skt.	Sanskrit
STTS	<i>Sarvatathāgatatattvasaṃgraha</i>
Tib.	Tibetan

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